AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Late horrid Conspiracy

TO

DEPOSE

Their Present MAJESTIES

K. WILLIAM and Q. MARY,

To bring in the FRENCH and the Late King *JAMES*, and ruine the City of *London*.

WITH

A Relation of the miraculous Discovery thereof.

ALSO

Some brief Reflections on the Trials of the Lord *Preston*, Major *Ashton*, and Mr. *Elliot*, who were chiefly concern'd therein, and found Guilty.

By a Gentleman who was present at their Trials.

LONDON,
Printed for *J. Humphrys*, 1691.

THE PREFACE,

TO

All that love the Protestant Religion, King *William* and Queen *Mary*, and Old *England*.

I *Need not tell you, Gentlemen, how many and how restless Endeavours have been used by the Enemies of our dear* Country *and dearer* Religion, *to destroy both ever since the* Reformation. *You cannot but remember with due regret and concern, what deep Designs have been frequently laid for this Purpose, within the reach of your own* Observations,

(*not to look back to King* James *the First, or Queen* Elizabeth, *of bleſſed and* eternal memory.) *Nor are you, I am confident, of ſo eaſie and implicit a Faith, as to be perſwaded by all the popular* Harangues *in the World to contradict your own ſenſes: And indeed, they only may inform us how much we have hitherto been the* Care of Heaven, *and what need there was of our being ſo, ſince we have taken ſo little of our ſelves, but with a ſort of* Stupidity, *which looks like* Incantation, *for the moſt part ſate tame and quiet, Expectants when the hanging Sword would drop on our Heads, which ſo ſlender a Thread as to outward view only ſupported; though we ought to believe there was an* Arm within the Clouds, *which would not ſuffer it to wound any further than its* Commiſſion: *For indeed, what elſe has hitherto preſerved us under the two laſt and the preſent Reign? For whether the Throne has been filled by an open* Papiſt, *or a pretended* Proteſtant, *or one who is* really *ſuch: One thing is certain, that* Popery, *with its inſeparable Companion, has been all along ſtruggling to get uppermoſt, and like a true* Politician, *was indeed neareſt the obtaining its deſire, when it appeared fartheſt from it. The* Popiſh Plot *in King* Charles's *Reign, although it obtain not its immediate Deſign, yet in the Effects thereof, went a great* length *towards our ruine, like Gunpowder in a* Vault, *doing incomparably the more miſchief by being* ſtifled. *All know what an odd* Branch *was grafted upon it, and how unnatural a* Fruit *it bore; the* Jugglers, *who managed that* Show, *pretending to change* Papiſt *into* Presbyterian: *Juſt as effectual a Miracle as their turning* Bread *into* Fleſh, *while 'tis* Bread *ſtill. However, this is more certain, That*

they

they went on ſo fairly, as to juggle *one King ('tis more than probable) out of his* Life, *and the other out of his* Throne; *for indeed he was little better than ſpirited away by the* Kidnapping *Prieſts and Jeſuites, the Merchandiſe of* Rome *being ſometimes the Bodies, as well as the Souls of Men. And one would have thought a* fair riddance *there had been now made for good and all, the vacant Throne being filled by the Conſent and Applauſes of all good men, with two Proteſtant Princes, whoſe actions as well as words have declared them as true* Defenders of the Faith, *as of the* undoubted Rights *and* Liberties *of their Kingdoms. But neither muſt theſe expect to ſit in quiet, like the ancient* Heroes, *they ſeem born for* Troubles, *and made on purpoſe to wade through* Danger *and* Honour. *And were their Enemies and the Proteſtant Religion's (whoſe Life and very Being ſeems very much bound up in Theirs) but all before 'em; Were there no danger but from the* Sword *of* France, *or the late King's* Valour, *there would not be ſo much reaſon for our apprehenſion and concern. But when thoſe ineſtimable* Lives, *as well as all our own, all that we have hazarded, whatever is* dear *to us, have* paid *for, continue to* pray, *and are ready to* fight *for; when all this, and the* Intereſt *of all* Europe, *ſhall be ſtill in as much danger as ever, from a ſort of People, that* Mercy is thrown away, and Pardon loſt upon 'em; *I cannot doubt, but we ſhall all be inſpired with a juſt Indignation againſt them: That the Law will be now in earneſt let looſe upon them; and that we ſhall no longer by a fooliſh* pity *towards them, endanger our own utter Ruine.*

Now

Now as to what their Deſigns are, and have been for ſome time paſt, theſe Papers may give ſome ſatisfaction, till a larger account ſhall be thought fit to be made publick.

An

An ACCOUNT, &c.

NO one can imagine that a *Plot* of ſo dangerous a nature, and large an extent as this appears to be, which is now brought on the *Stage* by ſo wonderful a *turn of Providence*, could be of yeſterdays growth, but as *Trees* which ſhoot their Roots *deep* into the Earth, and ſpread *wide* in the Air, may be eaſily gueſt to be of no very *late planting*; ſo, for a Reaſon not unlike, we may believe the *original* of this *Deſign* is to be fetcht much higher than its *Diſcovery*, and the event would be apt to make one think there was really more in the *Memorial*, we have been told was laſt Summer preſented to the *French King*, than ſome perſons would have us imagin. And indeed it may be worth another *Enquiry* what became of *that Plot*, for which, after ſo many *Proclamations* plainly declaring, that there were ill Deſigns then on foot againſt the Government, after ſo many perſons actually ſeiz'd and committed for the ſame; there was never any ſuffered beſides one *Blockhead* that was not worth a ſaving. Whether the reaſon of this, and of their acquitting all thoſe committed upon that account without any *Trial*, at which time my Lord C——, and *Preſton* among the reſt, were diſmiſt of their Confinements: Whether the reaſon of it were, That the Government was reſolv'd to try whether an *Exceſs of Mercy* and *Mildneſs* would work any thing on thoſe concern'd, or intended to let them run to the end of their *Line*, and more clearly diſcover themſelves to

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all the World, is not our preſent buſineſs to enquire. What's perhaps more ſure, is that as deep as theſe *Moles* lay, they did not work in the dark, but their Deſign were known ſome time ſince, to ſome *Miniſters of State*, (at leaſt one) and that few ſteps they took or Feet they advanced, were Secrets to them againſt whom they were level'd; which ſhews us, that the preſent Government wants not thoſe who can manage things of this nature, perhaps not much leſs dexterouſly than a *Cecil* or a *Walſingham*, and has further had a large and a happy *Influence* in opening ſome perſons Eyes, which *Prejudice* had ſo long either blinded or changed their colour in relation to the *Honour* and *Integrity* of a certain Noble Perſon, who after all the hot and haſty Cenſures paſt upon him, has been the chief or ſole manager of this Detection and Diſcovery.

Whoever were behind the *Scenes* in this Plot, we are certain enough who were publickly engaged in it, and the main *Go-betweens* and *Agitators* for the Cauſe, which were ſo lately tried for their Lives, and ſo juſtly found guilty, were my L. *Preſton*, one commonly called Major *Aſhton*, and Mr. *Elliot*.

Aſhton had been employ'd formerly by Major-General *W* ——, before the late King's abdication, and had married one Mr. *Rigby*'s Daughter, but whether or no embark'd in the ſame deſign, time may diſcover.

For my Lord *Preſton*, he has been ſufficiently known e're this, and perhaps it would not be either beyond *Truth* or *Modeſty* to affirm, He had been better have ſuffer'd the former Errors of his Management to have been forgotten, than by thus meddling in things of ſuch a dangerous nature, given liberty and occaſion to look backward, and thereby draw on his own Head nothing but Infamy, and Ruin.

ruine. It will be readily granted, that the Family of the *Grahams* have been not a little obliged to the late King *James*, and that *Gratitude*, where it leads us no farther than *Juſtice*, is a very Noble and Beautiful *Virtue*; but then a *Miſtaken Gratitude* and Honour ought not ſure to carry us into ſuch Actions as are pernicious to the *Society*, under which we enjoy *protection*, and to our *Country* towards which we have far deeper and ſtronger Obligations than we can poſſibly have to any *particular Perſon*. For I'd fain know, whether it wou'd be any excuſe for a Man who ſhou'd ſet *Fire* to his own *Father's* houſe, or the publick *Magazine* of his City, that he had formerly been oblig'd by the *Robbers* of the one, or declar'd *Enemys* of the other. Now how fit a perſon my Lord *Preſton* was for an *Employment* of this kind, and as it ſhou'd ſeem the general *Agitator* of the whole Affair, will eaſily appear, if we conſider his *Character*. He is undoubtedly, to do an *Enemy Juſtice*, a perſon of the higheſt *Form* for moſt Accompliſhments becoming a Gentleman.——His *Wit* is much above the ordinary Standard, he is extreamly well verſt in *buſineſs*, and as indefatigable in the proſecution of what he undertakes. He has been generally thought a Man of *Courage*, and if he appear'd to ſome more *dejected* than was uſual at the time of his *Tryal*, 'twas no great wonder when he found all his fine work unravel'd, the *Cauſe* ruin'd beyond a poſſibility of recovery, and his own Life at the mercy of offended Law, and injur'd Juſtice. After all, it muſt be own'd he is a great *Maſter of addreſs*, and his words are ſo charming, his motions ſo graceful, that a fitter perſon cou'd hardly be found out, or even

made on purpoſe to bewitch Men from their duty and Alegience, and for my part I rather wonder ſuch a man as he, has not made *more Proſelites* to his Maſters Intereſt, than that he has made *ſo many*. And if at his *Tryal* he ſhow'd not ſo great a *Strength of mind* as may have appear'd in other parts of his Life, I believe we may blame his *Ingenuity* for it, it being probable that one who knew himſelf ſo deeply and *palpably guilty* could hardly have *Face* enough to inſiſt much upon his Innocence. Add to this, that he's a reputed *Proteſtant*, and had been formerly Embaſſador in *France*, from the King of *England*. The other *two*, being but *Under Wheels*, to this great Mover, will not deſerve ſo much time, or notice, in this ſhort Paper, nor are ſo loaden with Commendations as we find he is in almoſt all the Letters, made publick at the *Tryal* from the Heads of the *Party*, nor are they of ſo fair a *Character* as his Lordſhip has had given him. For theſe yet *behind the Curtain*, time may draw it aſide and diſcover 'em, nor can any one think, that a deſign of this *Nature and Extent*, had only three or four Perſons imbarkt therein. Thus much therefore muſt for the preſent ſatisfie for the *Characters* of the chief Managers of this *Conſpiracy*.

As for the *Subject* and *Method* thereof, it can appear from nothing better, or clearer than the Original *Papers and Letters* of the very *Conſpirators* and Managers under their own Hand-Writing. And indeed there need no *Colours* to heighten or advance it.——The *Devil* is ugly enough of himſelf, cou'd the *Painter* deſcribe him like what he really is, nor needs the addition of *Tail*

and

and *Horns* to make him more terrible. The Truth is, 'twas a *Howe-ſtroak*, and there wanted no good will, either in the deſign or management. " 'Twas neither " leſs nor more, than the overthrowing the Govern- " ment, *Depoſing*, if not *Murthering* Their Majeſties, " *Whom God long preſerve, to the Confuſion of their Ene-* " *mies*, bringing in an Army of *French* and Strangers, " and joyning them on their Invaſion, after having be- " tray'd the Strength and Condition of the Nation to " them, and given an exact Account of our Fleet and " Forts, laying Deſigns for the Deſtruction of both, " and taking a particular and remarkable care to *plague* " *London*.———Which Favour the Honeſt *Citizens* can't be forgetful of, and ſome here at home of another Character, one would almoſt think had been aiming at, a little before the Plot was ripened.

This in general———More particularly the *Scene* was laid as deep and as ſubtily as *Hell* it ſelf could contrive it (though the Traytors concern'd, will be apt to ſay here, as well as in the *Gunpowder Treaſon*, *'Twas the Devil who diſcover'd it*) to deſtroy in a few Weeks, or Months, all that which has been ſo long and ſo firmly *building*, by the wonderful *Providence* of God, and the united *Wiſdom*, and *Valour* of the Nation at the expence of ſo much *Blood* and *Treaſure*, as it has already coſt us. Here at home it appears to have been carry'd on ever ſince, and before the *Bravado* of the *French* on our Coaſts the laſt Summer; for ſome of the Letters taken, mightily lament the *diſappointment* they met with at that time, and aſſure the Enemies of our Country, that

'twas for want of no *good will, but only a handsome opportunity, that they lent not their utmost assistance to destroy it*—— But you wou'd not have Men Rebel when they can't do't, and joyn the *French* at *Portsmouth* or *Devonshire*, when fast in the Tower of *London*. However they saved *their Stakes*, and by this time it seems were got ready for another *Game*, their only trouble being (as they express it) that their *Confinements* had retarded the Affair, but promising with double vigour to prosecute it as soon as discharged of their Imprisonment, and recover the ground which they had thereby lost.

But one grand Obstacle, it seems, the Plotters met with in the prosecution of their Designs. They knew very well the Mortal and Unchangeable *Aversion* rooted in the very Souls of the generality of the *English* against *Popery*, ever since the Reformation, and which they liked, at least, never the better for what knowledge they had thereof, during the short *visit* it lately made us: Accordingly they could not but imagine this would be a *terrible Obstacle* to their design of *reinstating* the late King *James* in his Throne, whom the *English* can hardly think much better or truer for having been so long under the *French* King's *Pupillage*, nor could believe it so much as possible, that he should return without the destruction of the *Protestant Religion*, not only in *England*, but very probably throughout all *Europe*. This *Objection*, which lay so full against the very *center* of their design, they found it necessary to obviate e're they could proceed one step further; and though all the

World

World elſe thinks it impoſſible that King *James* ſhou'd ſhould ever now return without Popery at his Heels, the *Agitators* of this deſign undertake to prove it poſſible——which was all it ſeems they would ſo much as pretend to; tho with what Reaſon, or to what end, I can't imagine, only the cauſe would bear no more, ſcarcely that it ſelf; for tho we believe 'tis poſſible, and barely ſo, for a Man to leap over the Bridg and not be drowned, or Tumble from a *precipiece* and not be Cruſhed to Pieces, (of both which we have Inſtances) yet none but a *Mad-Man* wou'd offer to repeat the *Experiment*, in hopes of the ſame *Event*. But that the *Villany* might proceed *Methodically*, they had a formal *Conſult*, and *Conference* between divers Lords and Gentlemen: *Tories as well as Whiggs* (thoſe are the words of the Paper which gives an Account thereof; Seized among others in *Aſhtons* Boſom) wherein it was Actually prov'd; *poſſible* that he might return without any *Injury to the Proteſtant Religion*.——And wherein were ſeveral fine *Chimeras* propoſed, which had King *James* Conquer'd the Country, and Recover'd His Throne by the *French* Arms, would have ſignified juſt as much as his Promiſe at his firſt coming to the Crown, and his Oath at the Coronation, to protect the Government as then Eſtabliſh'd, in Church and State.——But now, they tell ye, he had bit upon the Bridle, and known the ſmart on't, and if he ever came back agen, he had learnt more wit, then to take ſuch evil Courſes as had formerly Broke and Ruin'd him, Yes undoubtedly, as much as any *Highway-Man* or *Murderer* Pardon-

ed,

ed, during his happy Reign, wou'd leave the Road, or Cutting-Throats, for having been once in ſight of the Gallows. One wou'd think the former *Jaunt* of almoſt Twenty Years long, had been enough to have taught ſome Perſons *Wit and Honeſty*; if ever they wou'd have been capable of either: Or at leaſt, that the ſound *Ruffle* they met with from the People of *England* before they came to the *Throne*, ſhould have taught 'em, when fix'd in it, how to behave themſelves there, and what *Meaſures* to uſe with a Nation; who, tho 'tis not an eaſie matter to anger 'em, when once they are ſo, never *Bite* but their *Teeth* meet; and tho you cut their Heads off, won't let go their hold. There's a Proverb of a certain King, a *little wiſer* then him we are diſcourſing of, which may be with Truth and Manners enough apply'd—at leaſt to ſome of his Old *Courtiers*, and thoſe inſeparable Friends, who will to be ſure alwaies have his *Ears* and *Heart*—*Bray a Fool in a Morter, yet he won't depart from his Folly:* Which was one unlucky Objection, which I doubt, thoſe Men of *Projects*, and *Reaſon*, forgot to anſwer at this Conference; tho it ſeems, ſeveral there preſent, who pretended great Zeal for the *Proteſtant Religion*, (and without doubt, much according to knowledge) went away as intirely ſatisfied in the point in Controverſie, as one who has never made any experiment of Matter of Fact, is with ſome fine Hypotheſis of mounting to the World in the Moon, in a Chariot of *Ganza's*. In the mean while they muſt give other Men leave to *doubt* of what they were pleas'd to be *ſatisfied* with, ſo long at leaſt till they

they can produce one Instance of a Bigotted *Popish Prince*, who kept his word with his *Protestant* Subjects, longer then his *Interest* perſuaded him to obſerve it; or he wanted *Power* to break it. However, ſo much we may learn by the *Title* of the Conferrence before mentioned: that it is not being of one Party, or t'other, makes a Man *Honeſt*: That Loyalty is not Ty'd up to one ſide or Intereſt. That there are Traytors of both ſides; and that all thoſe who love the Government, ought heartily to agree in their Defence of it, tho they differ in their Sentiments, as to other things, unleſs they'd have both that and their ſelves Ruin'd by the *Common Enemy*.

After this *Conſult*, we may believe they puſh'd on more vigorouſly than formerly, and have brought things to *bear* ſo well, that in their ſeveral Letters of Treaſonable Correſpondence, they reſt almoſt ſecured of *Succeſs*; provided, they might be but powerfully aſſiſted by the *Freneh*, in that *manner* and *time* they propoſed, and had drawn up in a *Scheme* of the whole. And if they did their part, and a certain *Perſon* eaſie enough to be gueſt at, did but appear in *Weſtminſter-Hall*, (as they expreſs it in one of their Cants) they doubted not but *before next* Eaſter Term, *the Cauſes would come to a Final Hearing*. That is before that time, we had been all involved in *Blood and Confuſion*, and as miſerable as theſe Plotters and their Maſters cou'd make us.

To

To that end, *Exact Lists* were sent of all our *Naval preparations*, what Ships in Repair, and what not, from the First, to Sixth Rates, not omitting so much as the very *Yatchts* and *Tenders*. So that an Account also added of such *Commanders* as were most likely to be drawn to the *French Interest* —— So that we need now no longer puzzle our selves to guess which way so many *French-Pistols* creep in among us; (Twenty Four of which, have within this few days been Received in no larger a Sum then Forty Pound.) And yet more Villanous; *Directions* were prepared for the *French Fleet*, how, and where to *Fight*, and destroy Ours, their *Numbers* proportion'd, and the *Time* of their setting out, and appearing upon our Coast at furthest in *March*, or the beginning of *April*, to hinder the *Dutch Fleet* and Ours from *Joyning*. They were to *look to Spithead* in their way, *Burn the Shipping* there, and take the *Town*. To which end, a most *Exact Account* was drawn up for them of all the *Force* in *Portsmouth*. The State of the different *Forts*, as *South-Sea*, *Trevanion*, &c. As the *Number* of Men in Garrison, and the Facility of putting a design of that Nature in Execution. *London*, to be sure, among the rest, is never to be forgotten Nothing is to be done till those proud *Citizens* be humbled ——*Carthago est delenda*——Destroy that, or that will Destroy *Rome* or at least till things are Ripe enough, and the *Rebellion* strong enough, let *French* Ships alwaies lie ready on purpose to *Plague* it, as if their *Fire* had not been enough before. But

But they knew what would be moſt acceptable to the Perſon who employ'd them, who whilſt he remain'd at Helm, was ſo true a *Pater Patriæ*, who always ſo dearly lov'd the City, and between which and him there was ſo little Love ever loſt. Further if it ſhould come to a Battle, the very place was agreed on where they ſhould fight the *Engliſh*, not ſo high as laſt Summer, near the *Beachy*, but rather in the Chaps of the Channel. And all this with the landing of the *French*, and the publick defection of his Traytors at home, who were immediately to come in to their aſſiſtance, to be put in Execution as ſoon as poſſible after the departure of the King for *Holland*, a Proclamation being prepared (perhaps with as much as *Coleman*'s Declaration for diſſolving the Parliament) to the ſame effect with what was diſcours'd in the Conſult before mentioned, ſetting all the Varniſh poſſible on the Cauſe; the Proteſtant Religion to be as ſurely eſtabliſhed and defended as it was before, they only to have the Government, and all the poor harmleſs Catholicks to be left to nothing but their Devotions. The *Diſpenſing Power* and Prerogative to be left where it was before that Controverſie begun; all Perſons being alſo required to come under the *French* Standard, and *turn Traytors* by ſuch a day, on pain of being uſed as if they were ſo. In order to effect which Deſigns, and carry on a Correſpondence with the Enemies of the Nation, ſeveral parti-

cular *Cants* being invented, under which to cover their Treaſonable Practices. Some of the Letters were writ on pretence of Trade; adviſing their Correſpondents by all means to chuſe ſuch Factors as were bold and Induſtrious, to fix probable ends, and chuſe fit means to bring them to an iſſue, which they added, was the life of Trade as well as Government. Above all, to be quick and expeditious as poſſible in their Reſolutions and Actions, the Sea being now open, whereas a few Months hence 'twould be very dangerous ſailing. Others were diſguiſed in a Story of Tenants or Landlords, acquainting the Perſon to whom 'tis writ, that many of the Freeholders were diſſatisfyed with their uſage, *&c.*

Others related to a Law-Suit, as has been already mentioned; ſome were Letters of Civility and Compliment, as from one acquaintance to another, aſſuring them that their Elder Brother and moſt of their Family were their true Friends, and would continue ſo; enquiring for their little Daughter, whom tho' they had not yet ſeen, they had heard deſcribed very pretty and Witty. All this under feigned Names. To Mr. *Reading* and Mrs. *Reading*, Mr. *Charleton* and others.

Beſides theſe they had ſeveral Characters and Keys affixed to them, the more covertly to carry on the main buſineſs; one wherein all the Letters of the Alphabet were made uſe of to ſignifie Perſons and things, one Letter ſtanding for the *K* of *France*, ano-

another for *K. James*, a 3*d.* for the *K.* of *England*, the Duke of *Luxemburgh*, the Marqueſs with them, Duke *Powis* and his Dutcheſs, *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, *Holland*, *Dunkirk*, *&c.* the Marquis of *Carmarthen*, the Lord *Devonſhire*, the Lord *Clarendon*, Lord *Preſton*, and ſeveral other great Perſons, both their Friends and Enemies. But this was obſervable in moſt of their Letters, that although they began with ſome of thoſe ſorts of Cants already mentioned, and carried on the Humour pretty well, yet before the Concluſion, they uſed generally ſuch high and profound expreſſions of reſpect and veneration as could agree to none with any common propriety of Speech, but thoſe of the firſt Quality, and ſuch as they thought their Soveraigns. One good Man being ſo zealous in the Cauſe, as to proteſt he could venture his hopes of Heaven upon it, or an expreſſion little below it, if not the very ſame. But after all that could be written, ſaid or done, *London* ſtill ſticks in their Stomachs, whoſe Citizens or Clergy they could by no means be pleaſed with, the Clergy being as the ſignificant memorandums expreſs it, almoſt all *ſtark naught*, *and the very worſt of the whole Nation.* I wonder wherein have the Clergy of *London* obliged the Lord *Preſton* ſo highly, that he's pleas'd to do them the *honour* of ſo *ill a character*? Not that 'tis a new thing for Malefactors to give thoſe who detect and proſecute 'em, ill Names, while they ſtile none Honeſt Fellows but ſuch as are as great Villains as themſelves. In

the mean time it ſeems all the *Luidores* yet receiv'd are not ſufficient: Money is the Life of the Cauſe all the World over, which the Jacobites want as well as we, and thoſe Horſe-leeches ſtill cry, Give, Give, without being ever ſatisfied. Poor King *James*, muſt he pay Penſions ſtill when he himſelf is but a Penſioner? The miſchief is, his Braſs Money won't go in *England*, nay would be out of faſhon in *Ireland*, had the *Teagues* any other among them---So thick are the Complaints, and ſo bold the *Beggars*, that one may eaſily conclude *their King* can't live without them, nor they without him. *My Lord will acquaint you with my occaſions-- I have told my Lord my occaſions. The Bearer knows how I have been preſt, How well I have deſerv'd*----and much more to the ſame purpoſe, which the World will ſhortly ſee in the printed Tryals.

After all this, people may chuſe whether theyl'l believe any ſuch thing as a Plot, they may ſay and ſwear (and yet not be perjur'd) that this is as great a Sham as the Popiſh Plot in 78, and all thoſe who dye for it as errand *Martyrs* as *Coleman*, and as innocent as the Jeſuits; nay, had not all this been ſo ſtrangely diſcover'd, things had run on in the ſame current, and the great Agitators but got ſafely off with their Papers, or but got them diſpos'd of ſafely into the bottom of the Sea; had all this happen'd, and the *French Fleet* according to appointmnet appear'd on our Coaſt as they did the laſt Summer, who dared

have

have dreamt of a Plot in't, any more than the laſt time, or that they came for any thing elſe but to fiſh for a few Herrings on our Coaſt, or make fine Lines acroſs the Channel in a Sunſhiny day?

And here I ſhould have cloſed the account of this curſed Deſign, had not a new and ſtrange accident given us new confirmations thereof. No longer ſince than the laſt Week, were taken two Gentlemen coming aſhore from *France* in a ſmall Sloop near *Lewis* in *Suſſex*--- Sir. *R. P.* who by the greatneſs of his Genius, and meer ſtrength of his own natnral Reaſon (both of 'em as weighty Motives as the Jeſuits Arguments) left the Proteſtant Religion for the Roman, in the Reign of the late King *James*, and would fain have had his Children Educated the ſame way, had not their virtuous and prudent Mother placed them out of his reach. The other Collonel *M.* an old experienced Officer: Both going to a great Papiſts Houſe in thoſe parts, One of theſe a Man of Intereſt and Money, might have done excellently well, lying there *Perdue* till the Plot had ripen'd; then to have rais'd Forces for advancing the deſign; and the other of more Brains and Experience, when rais'd to have commanded them. With theſe were found ſeveral Letters of dangerous conſequence, which it's ſaid, confirm exactly what has been formerly diſcover'd. And here we are like to meet with ſomething of Ingenuity, tho' not much Wit, and the having been with

with King *James* at the *Boyne*, (or rather running away with him there,) actually and publickly acknowledg'd.

It may be worth also to remark the subtle ways the Conspirators took to prevent Discovery. They indeed did almost as much as Men cou'd do, who had no mind to be hang'd, to keep themselves safe, and had provided against every thing but Providence. Here at *Land* they made use of Iron-heels, opening and shutting with a sort of a Spring, to be cover'd with Leather, and worn in a Shoe, wherein to conceal their Treasonable Letters and Papers. But these too, were discover'd as well as the Person who made 'em, who lately was seiz'd, and in custody for the same. What they did at Sea to the same end and purpose, was very strangely render'd ineffectual, and prov'd only a strong presumption against 'em.

And from hence 'twill be an easy Transition to the wonderful Discovery of this so deep and well-laid Design. In which, perhaps there may be some passages not yet ripe for publick notice. What has yet appear'd on the open Stage in relation to this great Affair, is to this purpose.

After the Scene had been laid, and the Scheme of their Design'd fix'd as above-mention'd, and the Assurances and Protestations of the most considerable Persons therein engaged, given under their own hands to be witnesses against 'em; My Lord *Preston* and his two other Accomplices, Major *Ashton* and Mr. *Elliott*, &c. prepared

red for *France*, with an account of the whole Negotiation. In order whereunto, a Veſſel was to be hired to convey them to *France*, and one being found fit for the purpoſe, the Maſter was to be bargain'd with for the price; who at the firſt meeting, wherein he engaged ſafely to tranſport 'em thither, demanded 200 *l.* for his reward: At the ſecond Meeting, he fell to 100 l. *Aſhton* and *Elliott*, agreeing with him for the ſame; the Mony to be depoſited in Mrs. *Burdet*'s hand till the Service ſhould be performed; accordingly 93 Guinea's and a 6 *d.* were paid in, the odd ſix pence being broke, and one piece left with Mrs. *Burdet*, the other Mr. *Aſhton* had with him, which he was to deliver to the Maſter of the Ship as ſoon as ever he had landed his Paſſengers at any Port in *France*, and on his return and bringing that piece to Mr. *Burdet*, on the application and agreement thereof with the other piece in her cuſtody, he was immediately to receive the Hundred pounds. According to this Agreement, the Maſter prepared his Smack for the Voyage, and all things being ready, they came to *Surry-ſtairs* late in the Evening, to avoid ſuſpicion, calling a Sculler, with whom theſe 3, the Skipper and my Lords Man row'd *Through-Bridge* to the *Tower*, and over againſt it near *Pickle-herring-Stairs*, went aboard the *Smack* there provided. But the weather being cold, the Water-man, as is uſual, lent them his Coats to keep them warm, which it being late, and he in haſte to return, as well as they to get rid of him, were there forgotten,

ten; and on his recollecting himſelf, and returning, denyed, on which he was forc'd to go home without them.

In the mean time the Veſſel went down the River, as faſt as Wind and Tide cou'd carry it, and ſoon came to *Long-Reach*, where then lay the *George-Frigat* at Anchor, of whom my Lord *Preſton* had ſome apprehenſions, and therefore deſired the Maſter to hide them till they paſt that danger, which he did under the Quarter-hatches on the Ballaſt, whence they return'd above-Deck, when out of ſight of the Frigat. But at the Block-houſes at *Graves-End*, my Lord was again for hiding, and accordingly retired to his old hole; a Pinnace being juſt coming aboard them, which the Maſter thought was only come to Preſs, as Captain *Billop* who was in her, pretended all his buſineſs there was, who coming aboard with a Preſs-Warrant, humoured the buſineſs exactly, and askt the Maſter if he had any Men aboard? He reply'd, he had a Protection, which he produced: The Captain tells him he was ſorry for it, but muſt look further; and going into the Hold, found my Lord *Preſton* and the other two a top of the Ballaſt, whom he immediately ſearch'd for Papers, whilſt one of the Sea-men who came with him diſcover'd *Mr. Aſhton* thruſting ſomewhat into his Boſom, of which he immediately inform'd the Captain, who queſtioning him concerning

Aſhton with *Preſence of Mind* enough replyed, 'twas only his Handkerchief, which he immediately pull'd out of his *Boſom*; but the Captain not thinking fit to truſt him, clapt his Hand after, and found ſomething much more valuable, to wit, that famous Packet of Letters which did all their buſineſſes, with a ſmall leaden *Plummet* fix'd with a Packthred, ſufficient to have ſunk it deep enough for ever *telling Tales* agen; which way they would ſoon have ſent it, had not their Fear confin'd 'em to a place where it was impoſſible for them to put a thing of that Nature in execution. But there were yet found further Evidences againſt them; for exactly in the *ſame place* whence theſe Papers were taken up by *Aſhton*, the ſame Seaman who diſcovered him doing it, obſerved ſomething elſe lying on the Ballaſt, which proved a couple of *Seals*, both my Lord *Preſton*'s; one the *Seal of his Office*, as Secretary of State to King *James*, the other his *own Coat of Arms*; both which he deliver'd to his Captain; obſerving at the ſame time my Lord *Preſton* in great Confuſion, pale and *trembling*, and ſcarce able to ſpeak a Word. However my Lord and the others treated the Captain with a great deal of Complaiſance and Reſpect, deſiring him to go aſhore with them for ſome *Refreſhment*, who not judging that ſo convenient, yet civilly proffer'd to accompany them for that end aboard the *George Frigat*, which lay in their way to *London* (and of which they had now no reaſon any longer to be afraid.) But finding all thoſe Subterfuges render'd ineffectual by the prudence of the Captain, they reſolve to attack him on the two other ſides, on one of which moſt of Mankind lies open, with Arguments of Profit and Honour, offering him ſome *Hundreds of Guinea's* only to *Diſpoſe of thoſe Papers* he had taken, which he might eaſily do, without giving any

ſuſpicion to thoſe about him, my Lord having another *Parcel* of *Letters* of leſs concern, to which they might fix the Plummet that was on the others, and eaſily make 'em paſs for thoſe he had firſt taken: Adding further, That 'twould be a *generous thing for the Captain to go along with them.* But none of all this prevailed, he ſtill continued faithful to his Truſt, and altogether unmoveable; and the Pinnace bruſh'd away roundly towards *London*, which *Elliot* obſerving, ſwore they row'd as if they were carrying them all to *Priſon.* And when they came under the *Bridge*, wiſh'd heartily 'twould fall down and cruſh 'em all to the bottom----- But 'twas the ſame thing, the Bridg was as *ſtubborn* as the Captain was before, and ſtood ſtill in the ſame place where it has been this two or three hundred year, while the Pinnaces were tugg'd luſtily, and ſoon brought their *Fare* to *Whitehall*; where, juſt as they were ſtepping out of the Boat, my Lord *Preſton* clapt ſome Mony into the Hands of two of the *Smack's* Men, who were brought up with them, bidding 'em when examin'd, ſay, That the Ship was *bound for* Flanders, *not for* France.

No ſooner were they landed here, but Captain *Billop* waited on my Lord *Nottingham* with the Packet, which he had ſeiz'd, which he having open'd and look'd over, deliver'd all of 'em to the Captain again, who carried them to the Lord Preſident the Marqueſs of *Caermarthen*, who alſo opening and marking 'em, carry'd 'em to the King, after which my Lord *Sidney* had them in his Cuſtody, wherein appearing Treaſon enough to have hanged all the Plotters in *England*, my Lord *Preſton* was ſent back to the *place from whence he came* ſo lately before, the Tower of *London*, and the other two likewiſe committed.

'Twas

'Twas not long after this, before they were acquainted their Tryal was coming on, and time given 'em accordingly to prepare for the ſame. The *Bill was found* againſt 'em with little heſitation on *Thurſday, January* 15*th*, and the next day they were *arraigned* at the *Old-Baily*, my Lord's Petition to have the Tryal *put off till Monday* not being granted him. For indeed 'twas already more than time to let the Enemies of the Government know, that it *could be angry*, and dared both bring 'em to Juſtice for their Treaſons, and puniſh 'em for the ſame. Beſides, *Delays* in this caſe might on many accounts be dangerous, and would ſerve only to encourage the *Accomplices* of theſe Traytors, and diſhearten the true *Friends* of the King and Kingdom. On his Arraignment, my Lord *Preſton* inſiſted on his fruitleſs Peerage, (he being only a Knight in *England*, though a Viſcount in *Scotland*) which had been prejudged in an higher place, the *Houſe of Lords* having before thrown it out, and which there was no great likelyhood ſhould ever be allowed him, ſince his *Patent* was dated at St. *Germains*, after King *James* his *Abdication*; and had it been allowed for good here, 'tis certain, thoſe who had done it could not have cleared themſelves from ſuch conſequences as would have been moſt pernicious and invideous to themſelves and the Nation. -- However this took up ſome time, and about an hour or two's Argument was employed therein, but after all, it was *over-ruled* by the Bench, as any one would eaſily gueſs it could be no otherwiſe. He moved alſo for a Copy of his *Indictment*, and brought *Preſidents*, but thoſe were *anſwered*, and his Requeſt not granted, but a Copy

Copy of the Pannel he had according to cuſtom. The next day being the 17*th* of *January Ann. Dom.* 1691. he came to his Tryal, at which was a vaſt Concourſe of all degrees preſent, particularly, beſides the Lords Chief Juſtices, and their Brethren, ſeveral Noble Lords of the *Garter*, ſeveral Lords of their Majeſties moſt honourable *Privy-Council* and others, my Lord Preſident, Lord *Sidny*, &c.

And here I would not be miſtaken in what ſhort *Reflections* I intend to make on the Tryals of the petſons then accuſed and now convicted of this Conſpiracy, as if my Intent were to foreſtal the publick Accounts which will ſhortly be given of the ſame. Were this an Age like ſuch as we have ſeen which would not bear *Truth*, and the Tryals ſuch as wou'd force any one who ſaw or read 'em to wonder how ſo many *Mad-men* broke out of *Bedlam*, and got poſſeſſion of the *Bench*; and accordingly had we no expectation of a true Account of matter of Fact, then indeed ſomething of that Nature tho' from a private hand might be both neceſſary and grateful. But now all things have been managed as becomes a *Court of Juſtice*, not as formerly with the *Decency of a Bear-garden*, no doubt but the publick will be ſoon gratified with a true and exact Hiſtory of the Tryal of the perſons lately convicted, which make ſo much noiſe in the World. All I pretend to here is from my own perſonal obſervation and knowledg to compare a little theſe *Tryals* with thoſe of the *former Reigns*, and to ſhew the vaſt difference in the management of the whole in reſpect both of *Court*, *Bar* and *Evidence*.

In

In the opening the Evidence, here was no affected *Exaggeration* of Matters, nor Oſtentation of a *putid* Eloquence one after another, as in former Tryals, like ſo many Geeſe cackling in a row; here was nothing beſides fair matter of Fact or natural and juſt Reflections from thence ariſing. What few *Witneſſes* the Priſoners had were not affronted or *croſs-bitten* in their legal Evidence. The Priſoners themſelves were treated with that Humanity ever due to thoſe who are *unfortunate*, though the moſt *criminal* perſons in the World. There was ſo much *Reaſon* upon the Bench, that they had no need of *Rayling*, and thoſe at the *Bar* had ſuch uſage as if they came thither to be *tryed for their Lives*, not *baited to death*. As for the *Evidence*, 'twas the cleareſt and higheſt the Nature of the thing cou'd poſſibly bear --- Plain Proof, undeniable matter of Fact, a deſperate Plot at home, Correſpondence with Enemies abroad, inviting them hither, ſhewing 'em where to fall upon us, betraying the Strength of the Nation to 'em our Ships and Forts, corrupting and ſeducing thoſe at home, and taking whatever meaſures could poſſibly be thought on for our common Ruin. And this ſeized in the very *Boſoms* of the grand Conſpirators in their own undeniable *Hand-writing*, nay their *Seals*, even their *double Seals* together with it. Theſe Men had fairer play than Noble *Sidny*, &c. who were hanged by help of a *Marginal Note*, for controverſial Papers of twenty years ſtanding, to which they made both *Keys and Characters*, abuſed the *Court* as much as *Dryden's* Poem, and by a rare new *Law-figure* (for 'twou'd puzzle one to find it in

all *Voſſius* his Rhetorick) called *Innuendo*, extreamly obliged the late King *Charles*, by turning him into a *Tarquin*. No *Art* nor *Trick* was there uſed to make them plead *guilty*, as with --n, nor *one Murder* committed to facilitate *another* as with the great and unfortunate Earl of *Eſſex*, whoſe Blood even yet in vain crys for Vengeance. Every thing here was in its due place and order; the *Patriots* on the *Bench*, and the *Malefactors* at the *Bar*; not quite contrary, as we have ſeen formerly, when the Perſons *Arraigned* have as far and as viſibly out-weighed the Judges in Senſe, as in Probity and Honour. The *Juries* here were neither *frighted* nor *ſurprized*, nor ſuch as would be ſo; the Defence made by the Priſoners for the moſt part ſo *weak* and enervate, and ſo much below themſelves, that it plainly appeared the fruitleſs Effort of a *Guilty Mind*, and 'twas eaſie enough to read their *Sentence* in their Foreheads, pronounc'd by a *Judge within*, greater than thoſe who fill'd the viſible Tribunal.

On the whole, my Lord *Preſton*, was, after a fair Hearing, on a long and full Evidence, found Guilty, about Seven in the Evening of the ſame day he was Tryed. Major *Aſhton*, after a Defence which took up more time, on the *Monday* after, being *Jan.* 19. And on the ſame day *Elliot*'s Tryal was put off until another time; but whether any of them will obtain or deſerve their Lives by an ingenuous Diſcovery of all the Particulars of a Plot, ſo wide and deep as this will appear to whoever hears or reads the Letters which give an Account of it, a little longer time will very probably decide: Till when, here has been ſufficient already

already brought to light, as to the reality of the *Plot* it ſelf, the horrid and deſperate *Deſigns* thereby to be perpetrated, the manner of its *management*, and ſtrange *Diſcovery*; enough, I ſhould think, to ſatisfie all perſons, who in this point really *want* ſatisfaction, and are not themſelves either *Well-willers* to the Deſign, or actually concerned therein.

FINIS.